

FDPIR News and Updates

January 2012

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Food Package Workgroup

On December 7-8, 2011, the FDPIR Food Package Review Work Group met at Park Office Center, Alexandria, VA. Highlights of the meeting included: updates on the Regional Vendor Pilot, consideration of prioritized foods from tribal Regional wish lists, nutrition education in FDPIR, and new MyPlate resources and tools for consumers. A new *Super Tracker* tool was launched to help consumers track their physical activity and dietary intake, obtain advice, and meet 5 goals for 2012. Look for the *Super Tracker* tool at:

<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/SuperTracker/>

For more information on the work group, please visit the FDD website:

http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/fdpir/FoodPackageReview/fdpir_packagereview.htm.

You also can find the contact information for your regional representatives here.

New Foods for the FDPIR Food Package

Frozen whole chickens and individually frozen split chicken breasts are available in the FDPIR food package on a trial basis through March 2012. The FDPIR Food Package Review Work Group requested that the split chicken breast product be offered through the end of June 2012. In April, the Work Group will re-visit chicken options for the remainder of 2012.

Coming Soon - FDPIR National Study!

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has awarded the Urban Institute, in conjunction with NORC and Support Services International, Inc, a contract to conduct a national study of FDPIR and its participants. The last nationally representative study was completed in 1990. This study is needed to help you and FNS make future decisions regarding the program. The study's objectives include but are not limited to:

- Obtain an updated demographic profile of participants,
- Measure FDPIR's contribution to participants' food supply,
- Explore reasons for the downward trend in FDPIR participation,
- Study participants' movement between FDPIR and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and
- Examine food package distribution approaches.

The study will begin this fiscal year, and be conducted over a 3-year period. To make the study as representative as possible, ITOs and/or State agencies with varying levels of program participation will be asked to participate.

Consultation calls regarding the study are being held on January 18 and 26, 2012, at 2:30 P.M. EST. To obtain call-in information and to register for one of the calls, please go to <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/tribal>.

FNS appreciates your help in making this study a success!

Regional Vendor Distribution Pilot

FNS is considering a pilot of a Regional Vendor Distribution Model in FDPIR in 2012. Under the current National Warehouse Model, USDA buys food for the FDPIR food package. Two USDA contracted warehouses distribute the food to participating ITOs and State agencies administering FDPIR. Under the pilot, USDA would contract with a regional vendor(s) to supply food to some FDPIR programs. The vendor(s) would buy FDPIR-approved foods and distribute them directly to ITOs and/or State agencies administering the program. FNS anticipates that the Regional Vendor Model would potentially allow for greater opportunity to buy traditional and/or local foods from Native American producers, and reduce overall storage and transportation costs. We envision that the pilot would be available in a limited geographic area(s), and that a limited number of programs would participate. The remaining FDPIR programs would continue to be served by the National Warehouse Model.

USDA conducted consultation sessions in July 2011. The consultation sessions gave leaders an opportunity to discuss the pilot and express interest in participating.

Approximately 30 Tribes expressed interest in the pilot. FNS then convened a panel to develop recommendations for potential geographic groupings of interested Tribes. In August 2011, the panel came to an agreement on potential groupings.

In September 2011, USDA issued a Sources Sought notice at www.fbo.gov, which listed the potential geographic groupings and sought further information from interested vendors. FNS and FSA will use the information obtained from responses to the notice to help guide its decision making moving forward. Although there are no guarantees regarding pilot implementation, USDA will keep you informed of its status.

FDPIR Income Deductions Proposed Rule

On January 11, 2012, FNS published the FDPIR Income Deductions and Resource Eligibility proposed rule to expand access and improve the administration of the program. The proposed rule would (1) eliminate the household resource test as a basis for determining FDPIR eligibility, streamlining and simplifying program administration; (2) expand the current income deduction for Medicare Part B Medical Insurance and Part D Prescription Drug Coverage premiums to include other monthly medical expenses in excess of \$35 for households with elderly and/or disabled members; and (3) establish a standard deduction for shelter and utility expenses. The proposed rule is available for viewing and public comment at <http://www.regulations.gov>. Public comments are due on or before April 10, 2012.

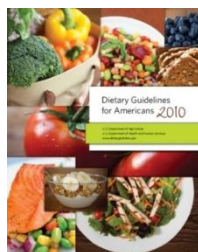
Nutrition Education Grants

Since FY 2008, FNS has made available \$1 million annually for FDPIR nutrition education. The focus of Food Distribution Program Nutrition Education funding is to improve and enhance the nutrition knowledge of FDPIR participants, and to foster positive lifestyle changes. FNS allocates the funds through a competitive application process. FNS issued a FY 2012 Request for Applications in September 2011, and received 18 applications. A panel of USDA staff from three agencies has reviewed and scored each application. FNS expects to make final award decisions by January 31, 2012. To view descriptions of projects funded in prior years, please visit the USDA's Food Distribution Division website:

http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/fdpir/fdpir_awards.htm

Hot Nutrition Resources:

Dietary Guidelines 2010



USDA released these guidelines in January 2011. The Dietary Guidelines are intended to be used in developing educational materials and helping policymakers in designing and implementing nutrition-related programs, including Federal nutrition assistance and education programs.

The Dietary Guidelines also serve as the basis for nutrition messages and consumer materials developed by health professionals for the general public. The three key focus areas are: balancing calories, foods to increase, and foods to reduce. For more information the guidelines visit: <http://www.dietaryguidelines.gov>

MyPlate Replaces MyPyramid



In June 2011, USDA unveiled the Federal Government's new food icon, *MyPlate*, to serve as a reminder to help consumers make healthier food choices. *MyPlate* is a new generation icon with the goal to prompt consumers to think about building a healthy plate at every meal. *MyPlate* used the Dietary Guidelines to make recommendations. To gather more information on this new icon visit www.ChooseMyPlate.gov

The new *MyPlate* icon emphasizes the fruit, vegetable, grains, protein, and dairy food groups. Try some of these options offered by FDD: black or pinto beans, rice, and corn.

FDPIR Sharing Gallery Update:



FNS and USDA, Food and Nutrition Information Center (FNIC) staff opened the Web based FDPIR Sharing Gallery in FY 2011. The Sharing Gallery displays materials submitted by ITOs, FDPIR State Agencies, Federal FDPIR staff, and other nutrition organizations. Users may share, review and print recipes, nutrition education calendars, ITO photos, and nutrition education ideas. Visit the Gallery at <http://fdpirgallery.nal.usda.gov/>

Sharing Gallery Technical Assistance Calls:

In September 2011, FNIC staff provided training by telephone to FDPIR program staff at FDPIR sites. ITO staff used their computers while FNIC staff guided them to find the gallery on the Web.

FDPIR Recipe Book Project Recipe

FNS is completing final tasks to print a new FDPIR recipe book, "A Harvest of Recipes Using USDA Foods". The book contains over 40 recipes, mostly created by a chef who used USDA Foods. FDPIR staff and participants submitted some of the recipes. Within the next few months, all FDPIR ITOs will receive hard copies, by mail, for each family enrolled in the program. For additional cookbooks and recipes visit:

http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/recipes/hp_cookbooks.htm and the FDPIR Sharing Gallery <http://fdpirgallery.nal.usda.gov/>

Two New Nutrition Handouts for FDPIR Participants

FNS and FNIC staff worked together to find two user-friendly handouts for FDPIR participants. The topics are basic cooking terms and cooking measurement equivalents. FDPIR staff can make copies of the handouts and distribute them to participants. The handouts will help participants enhance their cooking skills and follow recipes easily. FNIC staff will mail one copy of each handout to each FDPIR program site early in calendar year 2012.

FDPIR Fact Sheets

FNS is currently updating the fact sheets that describe all USDA foods. They provide information on packaging, storing, recipes, cooking tips, and nutrition. Nutrient values in Nutrition Facts Labels are from the USDA

National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, or are average values from vendors who provide USDA Foods. USDA's Food Distribution Fact sheets can be found here: http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/fdpi/cfs_fdpi.htm

Communication and Feedback

USDA Tribal Consultation

Did you know that USDA conducts quarterly consultation calls with Tribal Leaders and their designees? The next quarterly call is set for February 1, 2012, at 3:00 PM EST. For more information please visit:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/tribal/>

Send us your comments! Please let us know if there are any USDA food-related issues that you would like us to address in future editions of this newsletter. ***This newsletter has been prepared by the Food Distribution Division of the United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service in Alexandria, VA.***

If you have any questions or comments on our products or services, please email the Food and Nutrition Service, Food Distribution Division, Program Support Branch directly at fdd-psb@fns.usda.gov. You may also write to: Food Distribution Division, Food and Nutrition Service, USDA, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 508, Alexandria, VA, 22302.

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